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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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S-E-C-R-E-T

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COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT

SUBJECT Merseburg Airfield

DATE DISTR.

12 March 1956

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REFERENCES

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

5) CIA

report on the Merseburg airfield which gives information under the following headings: 1. Aircraft Counts, 2. Aircraft Details, 3. Flying Activity, 4. Snow Clearance, 5. Radio/Radar, 6. Possible Occupation of the Airfield by KVP (Luft), and 7. AA Defenses.

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC					
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~~SECRET~~

EAST GERMANY

AIR/MILITARY

MERSEBURG Airfield Sitrep (15 Dec 55 - 23 Jan 56)

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Attached at Appendix "A" is a sketch plan of the airfield showing the relevant features as at 28 Jan 56.

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1. AIRCRAFT COUNTS

Between 15 Dec 55 and 28 Jan 56, no more than 7 MIG 17s and 2 IL 28s have been observed on the airfield at any one time. All hangar doors have remained closed, but on one occasion whilst the readiness aircraft were being withdrawn, it could be ascertained that at least one hangar was full of fighter type aircraft.

No MIG 15s have been observed during the period.

2. AIRCRAFT DETAILS

Apart from the 4 Readiness aircraft, no MIG 17s have been fitted with auxiliary wing tanks.

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3. FLYING ACTIVITY

- a) Throughout the period, 4 MIG 17s have been parked at Readiness at the take-off end of the runway. These aircraft have been towed back to the hangars approx half an hour before dusk and returned to the runway approximately half an hour after dawn.
- b) On 3 occasions only during the period have aircraft been airborne from the airfield, i.e. 10, 13 and 19 Jan 56. On each occasion 3 MIG 17s have taken off and carried out local circuits and landings for a period totalling approx 2 hours, the aircraft being refuelled at the end of the runway twice during the total flying period. No attempts at formation flying or rapid take-offs or landings were practised, the aircraft flying without auxiliary wing tanks.
- c) Night flying has taken place on 2 occasions only when a total of 3 MIG 17s were airborne, confining their sortie entirely to circuits and landings. Throughout the period when the a/c were airborne on the circuit at night, the TOKEN was in operation. The aircraft carried normal navigation lights and for landing the 14 white lamps on the SOUTHERN side of the runway were supplemented by a mobile searchlight located at the EASTERN end of the runway.
- d) None of the previously reported IL 28s have been airborne during the period, although only 2 are now visible on the airfield, dispersed at the same position where there have been 3 similar aircraft for several months.

4. SNOW CLEARANCE

No attempts have been made at getting the runway cleared of snow, even though on several occasions the latter has been 3 or 4 inches deep. The four Readiness aircraft have remained uncovered and have been kept free of

snow ...


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4. snow, and alongside of these aircraft there have constantly been two radio vans,  and a jeep.

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5. RADIO/RADAR

a) The previously reported TOKEN located in the NORTH-WEST corner of the airfield has not been in regular operation during the period of report, except for a period of approximately 15 - 20 minutes each morning at approximately 0800 hours. This radar is manned by a party of Soviet ORs wearing plain black shds.

A single pair of telephone wires link the cabin of the TOKEN to a nearby bunker located in a thin wood, but no further telephone wires reappear from this wood in any direction whatsoever. There are indications, however, from disturbances of the soil that there is some sort of buried cabling leading SOUTHwards from the bunker in the direction of the runway. Very little activity has been observed on this TOKEN site, except at night, when flying has been undertaken. During the day no more than 2 or 3 ORs have been observed on the site.

b) The KNIFEREST and FISHNET radars located in the SOUTH-EAST corner of the airfield between the hangars and the nearby rail spur have remained unchanged but have not been observed in operation during the period.

c) 2 radio vans have been parked alongside the 4 Readiness aircraft throughout daylight hours. Alongside each van there was a tubular mast surmounted by a VHF Disc Cone.

6. POSSIBLE OCCUPATION OF THE AIRFIELD BY KVP (LUFT).

A small number of KVP (Luft) personnel have been observed entering and leaving the airfield during the period. Working on the airfield there is a newly arrived detachment of the BAU UNION DRESDEN (? Bau Union SUED) engaged on repairing 2 damaged former Luftwaffe barrack blocks located in the SOUTH-EAST corner. In casual conversation a responsible building official stated that these buildings were being prepared for KVP (Luft) personnel.

7. A.A. DEFENCES.

There are no AA defences whatsoever visible anywhere on the airfield.

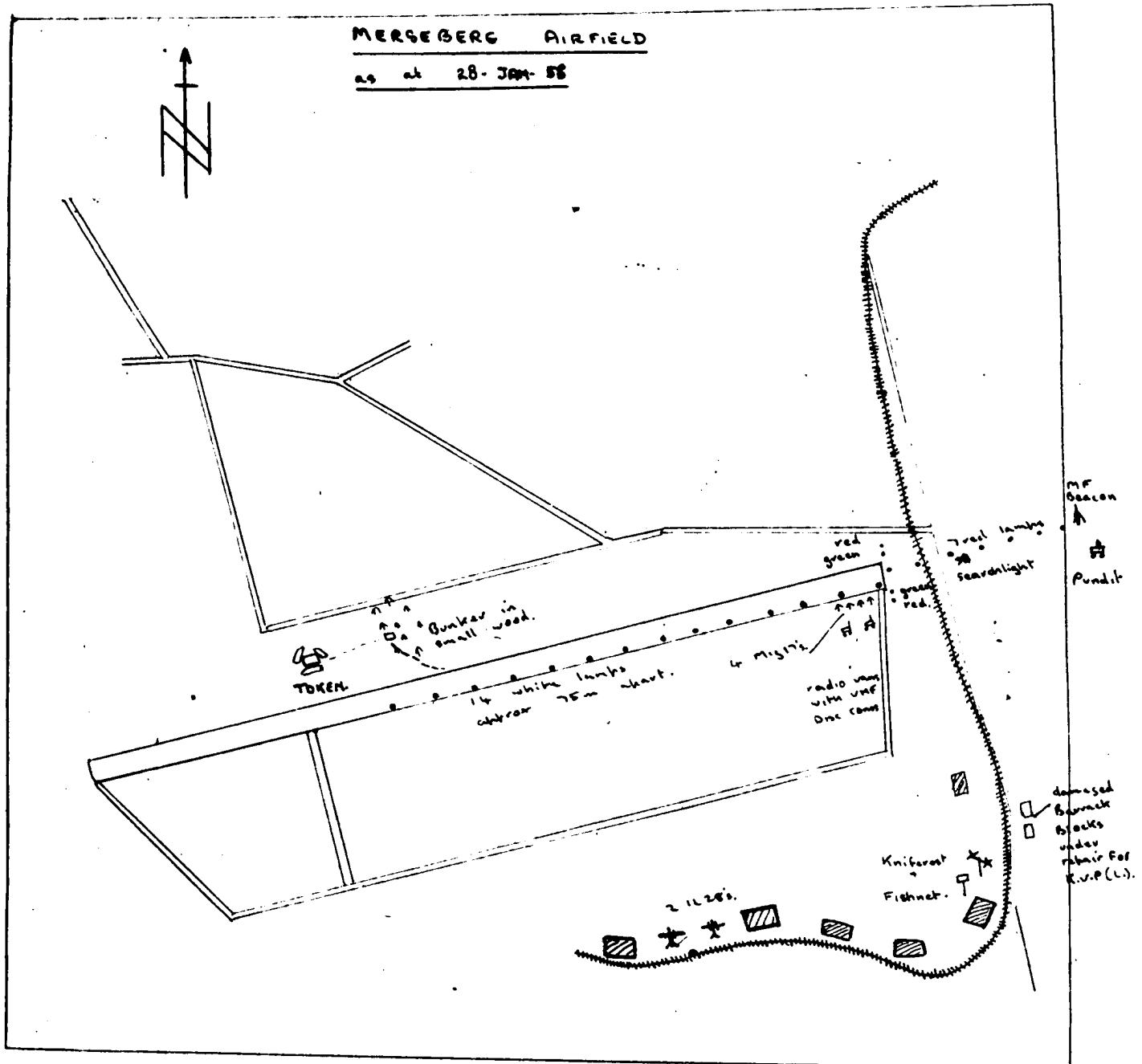
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APPENDIX A

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